

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Claims 1 and 3-12 are pending in this application. Independent Claim 1 is the only independent claim. By this Amendment, independent Claim 1 is amended, and Claim 12 is added. Support for the amendment and new claim can be found, for example, in Figs. 1-3 of the present application. No new matter is added.

The Official Action rejects Claims 1 and 5-10 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 4,447,230 to Gula et al. ("Gula"); and rejects Claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Gula in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,734,091 to Boyle et al. ("Boyle"). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

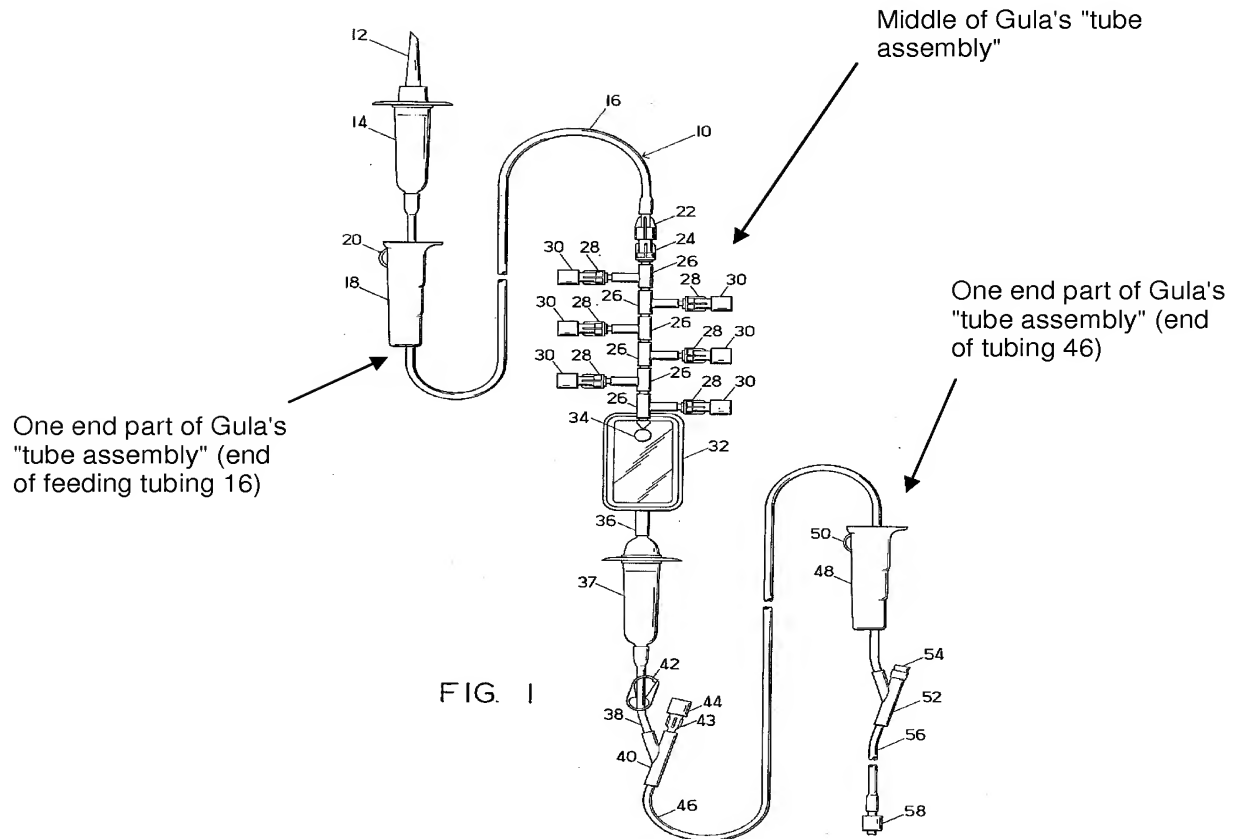
Independent Claim 1 recites a liquid transfusing tube comprising, *inter alia*, a tube having an axis, and a connector provided at one end part of the tube. The connector includes a male connector and a female connector. The axis of the male connector and the axis of the female connector substantially coincide with each other, and the axis of the tube is substantially orthogonal to the axes of the male and female connectors. Gula fails to disclose the claimed connector for at least the following reasons.

First, the axis of Gula's "tube" is not substantially orthogonal to the axis of what the Official Action says are the male and female connectors. The Official Action takes the position that Gula's tee fitting 26 corresponds to the claimed connector, and that the feeding tubing 16 and another tubing 46 together with the tee fitting 26 correspond to the claimed tube (see Fig. 1 of Gula). As shown in Fig. 1 of Gula, the tee fitting 26 is attached at its ends to an adjacent fitting 26 (see col. 3, lines 22-25) except for the upper and lower tee fittings 26 which are connected to a

female luer lock adapter 24 and a fluid filter 32, respectively. According to the Official Action, the longitudinal ends (i.e., vertical ends in Fig. 1 of Gula) of the tee fittings 26 are male or female connectors that axially coincide with each other. However, the longitudinal ends ("male and female connectors") of the tee fittings 26 also coincide with the feeding tubing 16 and the other tubing 46. That is, the longitudinal ends ("male and female connectors") of the tee fittings 26 are parallel with the feeding tubing 16 and the other tubing 46. The axis of the longitudinal ends ("male and female connectors") of the tee fittings 26 are not substantially orthogonal to the axis of the feeding tubing 16 and the other tubing 46.

Therefore, Gula fails to disclose, in combination with the other claimed features, that the axis of the male connector and the axis of the female connector substantially coincide with each other, and the axis of the tube is substantially orthogonal to the axes of the male and female connectors, as recited in independent Claim 1. Thus, independent Claim 1 is patentable over Gula for at least these reasons.

Second, Gula's tee fitting 26 ("connector") is not provided at one end part of Gula's "tube" as recited in Claim 1. As discussed above, the Official Action takes the position that Gula's feeding tubing 16 and another tubing 46 together with the tee fitting 26 correspond to the claimed tube. That is, the Official Action states that the feeding tubing 16 / another tubing 46 / tee fitting 26 "assembly" corresponds to the claimed tube. However, as clearly shown in Fig. 1 of Gula, the tee fitting 26 is provided at the middle of the feeding tubing 16 / tubing 46 / tee fitting 26 assembly. The tee fitting 26 is not provided at an end part of the feeding tubing 16 / tubing 46 / tee fitting 26 assembly. An annotated version of Gula's Fig. 1 is reproduced below for the Examiner's convenience.



As shown above, the tee fittings 26 are not provided at an end part of the feeding tubing 16 / tubing 46 / tee fitting 26 assembly, which the Official Action says corresponds to the claimed tube. Thus, Gula fails to disclose, in combination with the other recited features, a connector including a male connector and a female connector and *provided at one end part of the tube* constituting a liquid transfusing channel as recited in independent Claim 1. Therefore, Claim 1 is patentable over Gula for at least these additional reasons.

As a result of the combination of features, an open port for connection of another liquid transfusing tube is always present, and the possibility of the number of the connection ports being insufficient upon a sudden change in the condition of the patient is reduced. Accordingly, the liquid transfusing line (liquid transfusing route) can be extended quickly and assuredly (see Figs. 1-3 and lines 12-22 on page 28 of

the present application). In Gula, the number of tee fittings 26 is limited to the number existing when the intravenous administration set 10 is assembled (for example only six tee fittings 26 can be used in the example shown in Fig. 1 of Gula).

Claims 3-11 are patentable over the applied references at least by virtue of their dependence from patentable independent Claim 1, as well as for the additional features these claims recite. Thus, a detailed discussion of the additional distinguishing features recited in these dependent claims is not set forth at this time. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Claim 12 is presented for consideration and further defines features of the claimed connector. Claim 12 is patentable over Gula at least by virtue of its dependence from patentable independent Claim 1.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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